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HOMEMAKERS' CHEAT

Wednesday, August 7, 1940

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "HAM FOR HOT WEATHER." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Publication available, Leaflet 81-L.

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Ham in hot weather is a "natural"--- for the woman who plans meals, for the people who eat the meals. Once cooked, ham is easy to put on the table in any of a dozen ways, or to make into sandwiches in a jiffy for out-doors meals. Then there's the connection between salty food and sweltering weather, as a means of keeping cooler and more comfortable.

The Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture points out that when people perspire heavily they lose a great deal of salt through the pores of the skin. This has to be restored in some way. Men working in heavy industries or in hot places often take salt pills to replace this salt. This also makes them drink more water, and that's a good thing, too. But most of us do not need to go to that extreme. Eating a salty meat like ham, will do the trick for us.

Incidentally, ham is only one of the cuts of cured pork. There's bacon, and the cured pork shoulder, and the little boneless shoulder butt or "picnic" ham. And also Canadian-style bacon,- that's the boned, cured loin. Salt pork is still another good salty meat from pigs. In the south it's often call "white meat" or "fat back", and is used for seasoning other dishes, or for larding pot roasts, veal, or any meats that need extra fat. You can cook the lean cuts of salt pork like ham or corned beef.

There's still another reason, besides its convenience and its saltiness, for having ham often this particular summer of 1940. And that's because there's a very large supply of pork of all kinds. The market specialists of the Department

of Agriculture reported almost 600 million pounds of pork on hand the middle of July. Much of this was in the form of bacon and ham.

Now about ham on the dinner table. As it's good either hot or cold, you will most likely want to buy a half or a whole ham and bake or boil it first to serve hot. ("Sinner" is a better term than boil; you cook ham at moderate heat to get the best results.) Once cooked, you can have sliced cold ham whenever you want. Be sure to have the carving knife sharp, by the way, and serve the ham in very thin slices, whether it's hot or cold. Then the meat literally "melts in your mouth."

After the slices are too small or irregular to serve, you can grind up the odd-shaped pieces and use them in a great many ways. Mix the ground ham with potato for potato cakes or ham hash; sprinkle some of it over an omelet as you roll it up to serve; make it into a spread for canapes; use it as part of the seasoning for devilling hard-cooked eggs; add it to the stuffing in stuffed green peppers; spread it under a poached egg served on toast.

Ground ham makes a fine sandwich filling with salad dressing, chopped hard-cooked eggs, parsley and celery or pickles. Or for a hot dish, mix it with rice or noodles or make ham pinwheels. You know-- those delicious rounds of biscuit dough that has been rolled out, spread with ground ham in a very thick white sauce, and rolled up like a jelly roll. You cut across the roll to make the pinwheels, about an inch thick, and bake them in a hot oven .

Another excellent hot dish is French-toasted ham sandwiches. You mix the ground ham with enough butter or other fat to spread easily on bread, and make sandwiches. Beat up one or two eggs with one cup of milk. Dip the sandwiches lightly on both sides in the egg and milk. Fry the sandwiches until golden brown in a small amount of fat, and serve hot.

When you go to market to buy a ham, you may find some of the brands claim unusual tenderness. These have probably been smoked at higher temperature than in the old method of curing. Such hams are mild in cure and do not need soaking.

You can judge ham quality to a certain extent by looks. The best ones are meaty, thick through, and well-rounded. They have a moderately short shank, some marbling of fat through the lean, and the lean meat is a good bright color. Of course it is not economical to buy a piece of ham with a wasteful amount of fat. On a whole ham the amount of fat on the butt end indicates what you can expect.

Wrap ham in oiled paper and put it in the refrigerator, whether it's cooked or uncooked. The Bureau of Home Economics also suggests spreading a little salad oil over the cut surface of an uncooked half ham to delay drying and molding. And if you buy canned ham, keep it in the refrigerator once the can is opened.

You generally buy sliced bacon in small quantities. To cook it crisp, lay the slices in a cold or moderately warm skillet, and cook very slowly. Don't let the fat get hot enough to smoke. Turn several times. Pour off any extra fat that cooks out, and when delicately browned, lift the bacon out of the pan to a piece of absorbent paper, such as a paper towel, and let it drain and get crisp.

Serve bacon in other ways besides having it for breakfast, with or without eggs. Try it for luncheon with fried apple rings, or for dinner in a mixed grill. Or break it into pieces to stir into greens or snap beans. And did you ever try putting bits of bacon into corn muffins or corn bread?

Fried apples go well with both ham and-bacon, and so does fried pineapple. Broiled canned peaches are another fruit relish especially good with ham. Sauces include raisin or cider sauce, or fresh grated horseradish mixed with whipped cream. Even in summer you'll have a hot dinner once in a while, and when the main dish is ham, you can accompany it with any sort of sweetpotatoes, and any of the greens. Of course when you serve your ham cold, you make no mistake if you combine it with one of the fresh vegetable salads.

Other ways of cooking cured pork are given in a free government leaflet. The number is 81-L, and you can get a copy by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C.

